



A slap on the hand not enough

ROBERT FLEMING, **GUEST COLUMN**

Published on May 19, 2010

Bob Vrbanac's article "'Hands slapped' in fluoride fallout" revealed serious shortcomings, and exposed weakness in those supposedly in charge. Elected officials dished out hollow, do-nothing statements, after the Region's Medical Officer of Health (Dr. Nolan) consciously ignored everyone's right to know fluoridation was off, by disobeying an Ontario Public Health requirement to notify by 90 days.

Pharmacists, doctors, dentists, elected officials and citizens were kept in the dark so staff could avoid losing face. This discovery flows from internal e-mails that otherwise may have gone unseen.

The e-mails signify Dr. Nolan evaded two earlier opportunities to be truthful by omitting certain facts from her own reports. One report dated Nov. 17, 2009 was given to the Regional Community Services Committee to explain what happened. The second report dated December 1st, 2009 responded to questions submitted by Waterloo Councillor Angela Vieth about why the City wasn't notified. Anyone reading or hearing these reports was led to believe circumstance prevented timely notification; staff failed to understand their responsibility to notify; and communication broke down.

Only now has the primary failing emerged from the e-mails. It was Dr. Nolan's desire not to report and to withhold information. Should this kind of behaviour be tolerated? What else aren't we being told about water fluoridation, in pursuit of saving face or avoiding liability?

Claims made:

Water fluoridation is safe and effective. Yet, the Region was unable to provide double-blind, variable controlled, statistically significant, published, peer-reviewed science to prove it.

Fluoride levels in our drinking water are closely monitored. Yet, the Region was blindsided by simultaneous fluoridation feed failures despite months of erratic fluoridation outputs foretelling of imminent failure.

Hydrofluorosilicic acid is a compressed gas. Dr. Nolan has since been corrected that it is a liquid.

All of Waterloo's fluoridated water stays in Waterloo. Dr. Nolan has since been corrected. This is not the case.

Fluoridation emergency measures are in place. Unlikely, when you don't know what we fluoridate with or where it flows. Even the e-mails showed staff were unable to define which neighbourhoods/street boundaries were affected by a particular fluoride feed site.

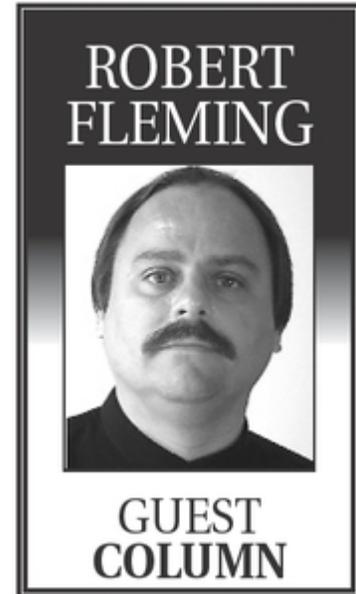
We know who to notify. In an October 30th, 2009 email Dr. Nolan writes, "Do we have fax or addresses to dentists in Waterloo so we could send this (notification) to them...?" With the Y2K emergency preparedness behind us, why are we still asking for those contacts?

We know what and when to notify. So, why withhold notification, and why can't we determine who receives drinking water from a particular fluoridation feed point?

Delivering medication via our drinking water system is serious business, far too serious for fumbling and covering up. Can we trust over-fluoridation will never occur, and proper health alerts will always occur?

On October 25 the public will decide.

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